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DOE FOR CAROLYN GAY

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SUBJECT: NNAMANI-- THE WORST ELECTION IN ENUGU'S HISTORY

Classified By: Ambassador John Campbell for reasons 1.4 (b & d).

11. (U) Summary: Senate President Ken Nnamani summoned Poloff to his Enugu home late in the afternoon April 14. He pronounced Saturday's poll to be "the worst election in the history of the state" and reported that most of the people of Enugu (including the Senator and his family) had been disenfranchised. The Senator told Poloff that he had complained to INEC, the government, and the ruling party about the conduct of the election and recommended postponement of the election to April 18, but his suggestion was not adopted. He called on INEC to solve the problems with the Enugu election and noted that "the world was watching." End Summary.

12. (U) The problems in Enugu began the evening of Friday April 13, when INEC officials displayed the official election materials to party representatives at the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) office in Enugu. The opposition parties noticed that the vote tally sheets listed on the manifest of election materials were missing and demanded that the tally sheets be produced or their absence explained. The standoff continued on Saturday morning, with the opposition party supporters and civil society activists refusing to allow INEC to deploy any election materials from the CBN (where they had been stored) to the field. At 11:30am, INEC's Resident Electoral Commissioner (REC) Dr. Abdul Bulama brought in the military, under command of the General Officer in Charge (GOC) of the Army's 82 Division. The GOC ordered his soldiers to disperse the crowd and allow the movement of the election materials. Eyewitnesses reported that the soldiers fired their weapons and used teargas to do so. Election materials were then sent to the local government area and ward levels for distribution to individual polling stations. Voting began in some parts of Enugu city around 3:30pm, but in other parts of the city and in most rural areas there was still no polling as late as 6:00pm, according to international and domestic observers. In most polling stations, voting or vote counting would be extremely difficult after 6:30pm, when darkness fell.

13. (U) Because of the standoff at the CBN and the delay in distribution of election materials, Nnamani said he had recommended to INEC Saturday morning that they simply postpone the election, perhaps until Wednesday April 18, as in his opinion there was no way to distribute materials on time April 14. The Senator opined that if materials left the CBN at 11:30am, they could not be distributed until at least

3:00pm and voting might commence by 4:00pm. This would leave only two hours for voting before nightfall, which in his view was insufficient to obtain any meaningful result. However, despite his complaints to INEC, the PDP, and the government, the election was not postponed.

¶4. (U) Nnamani said that as of 5:30pm Saturday, most of the people of Enugu, including himself and his family, were disenfranchised, as their polling stations had not yet opened for the day. He said that he would be "shocked" if INEC could announce results for Enugu under these circumstances and that any winner declared would have no credibility. The Senator suggested that the only way forward was to repeat the election, and he noted that the world was watching and any solution was in the hands of INEC.

¶5. (C) Comment: Senator Nnamani is a member of the ruling People's Democratic Party and the third-ranking member of the Government of Nigeria. His condemnation of the Enugu election, which he repeated live on AIT television a few minutes later, demonstrates that irregularities in Enugu were severe enough to shock even government insiders. However, Nnamani is not running for re-election and has less to lose than many other politicians.
CAMPBELL